



Nashville VBA Regional Office

UTVA Report

December 2015

- 1. Completed 1.4M claims in FY15 – nearly 67K more than last year – highest ever in our history – sixth year in a row of more than 1M claims; fourth year in a row we set new records again!**
- 2. Reduced backlog 88% from a peak of 611K in March 2013 to historic lows – currently 75,122; reduced inventory 58% from 884K peak in July 2012 to 369,328 – 28% lower than FY14; claim quality at 90.2%; issue quality at 96% and above 98% in 7 of 8 categories where we measure quality – several above 99% – one at 97.7%**
- 3. Average days a Veteran is waiting for a claims decision (pending) is 91 days – a 191-day reduction from a peak of 282 days in March 2013 – lowest ADP in the 21st Century; average days to complete is 129 days – a 60-day reduction from FY14**
- 4. Increased claim productivity per FTE by 25% since 2011 and medical issue productivity per FTE by 81% since 2009 – helped mitigate effects of a 132% increase in workload (2.7M medical issues in 2009, 6.35M medical issues in 2015); added estimated 1.8M+ Veterans to compensation rolls since 2009 (1.2M net), and 28% more Veterans and Survivors to compensation and pension caseload (from 3.9M to 5M)**
- 5. Went from touching 5,000 tons of paper annually to processing 99.8% of disability compensation claims electronically, with 348K claims in electronic inventory – only 25K pension and DIC in paper, completed more than 3.95M rating decisions and over 2.2M claims in VBMS**
- 6. Enabling Veterans to file claims online through eBenefits – over 5.2M registered users, 212M contacts with Veterans in FY15 (96% online) – 211% increase over FY14 – vs. 9M contacts (majority by phone) in 2009**
- 7. Expediting Veterans claims: 46% of receipts from VSOs in FY15 were Fully Developed, up from 3% in 2012; received over 2.8M completed exam templates from VHA in FY15**
- 8. Dedicated non-rating workforce completed 3.1M non-rating end products in FY15 – 15% more than the 2.7M completed in FY14 – and 71% more than FY11**
- 9. More automation: over 1 in 4 Veterans submit their dependency requests online – more than 63 percent of these receive payments in under 1 day; automatic burial allowance payments to surviving spouses within 6 days (down from 190)**
- 10. Appeals actions increased 30% from 135K in 2011 to 176K in FY15; held appeal rates steady amidst increased production – nearly 1.4M completed claims in FY15, 11-12% (historical rate)**

appealed, **4-5%** reached Board of Veterans Appeals, **1.2%** decided in Veteran's favor, often based on additional evidence

11. Reduced Veterans Pension backlog by **96%** from peak of **15.3K** to **606**; inventory by **57%** from peak of **36.4K** to **15.7K**; reduced Survivors' Dependency and Indemnity Compensation backlog by **83%** from peak of **8.8K** to **1.5K**; inventory by **51%** from peak of **19.1K** to **9.4K**; improved DIC timeliness by **105 days** from peak of **182** to **76 days** while maintaining **99%** accuracy

12. Provided **\$57.6B** to send **1.5M** Veterans and dependents to school under the Post-9/11 GI Bill since 2009; now processing reenrollment claims in **average of 12 days** at **99.8% accuracy**

13. Over **2.4M** total loans on the books; guaranteed a record **631K** loans in FY15 (**44%** more than FY14) totaling **\$153B** and helped **90K** Veterans avoid foreclosure, while maintaining the lowest foreclosure rate (**1.37%**) in the industry for **25 of the last 29 consecutive quarters**

14. Paying insurance death claims in an average of **3.7 days** at **99.7% accuracy**

15. Paid an estimated **\$1.2B** in VR&E benefits to nearly **100K** Veterans in FY15

Nashville Regional Office Staffing and Hiring Update

1. The Nashville Regional Office is staffed at 500 full-time equivalents and 8 temporary hires. The Nashville Regional Office workforce is currently comprised of 61% Veteran employees.
2. The Nashville VSC hired 51 Veterans Service Representatives (VSRs) in Fiscal Year 15.

Summary of Service Provided by the Nashville Regional Office Veterans Service Center (VSC)

1. Claims Completion for Fiscal Year 15 (October 2014 through September 2015)
 - a. Completed **35,764** disability rating claims
 - b. Completed **18,712** non-rating claims/adjustments (34.9% increase over last FY)
 - c. Quality for Fiscal Year 15-The station's 12 month cumulative rating accuracy for was 93.2%, the 3 month issue based rating accuracy was 99.4% and the 3 month claim based rating accuracy was 100%; all above the national average.
 - d. VSC began FY15 with an ADP for Rating Claims of 126.6 days; this number was reduced to 98.5 days by the end of the FY.
 - e. Homeless ADP remained below the target of 75 days at 69.8.
 - f. The backlog inventory was reduced from 4,638 to 2,163; a 46.6% reduction.
 - g. One year old cases were reduced from 580 in FY14 to 364 at the end of FY15; which equates to a 62.7% reduction.

Summary of Service Provided by the Nashville Regional Office Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment (VR&E) Division

1. Rehabilitation Services **Fiscal Year 2015 (to July 31, 2015)**
 - a. Assisted **189 Veterans** in obtaining suitable employment
 - 154 Suitable Employment
 - 30 MRGs
 - 9 IILPs
 - b. Processed **330 IDES** applications

- c. Processed **3374 Chapter 31** applications
- d. Processed **1840 Entitlement Determinations**
- 2. Vocational Rehabilitation Services
 - a. Served approximately **3,400 VR&E** participants
 - 2481 in Rehabilitation Plans
 - 1767 pursuit of training
 - 87.5% Active Case Workload
 - b. Provides greater access to Veterans throughout the state of Tennessee through offices in Nashville, Memphis, Clarksville, Ft. Campbell and Knoxville
- 3. VetSuccess on Campus (VSOC)
 - a. Serves approximately **180 students a month** between Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) and Austin Peay State University (APSU).
 - b. Provide a range of services to include tutoring, benefit information and vocational guidance to all service members, Veterans, and eligible dependent students on campus.
 - c. Each VSOC location has an active mentoring program where Veteran students provide information and guidance to these students. The VA Work Study program is utilized to compensate these mentors for their time and assistance.
 - d. MTSU opened the Veterans and Family Center in November 2015.
 - e. APSU celebrated its one year anniversary in October.
- 4. IDES Program
 - a. The VR&E Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) program includes **10 IDES VRCs**, with **7** counselors located at Ft. Campbell, KY and **3** at the nearby Clarksville VR&E Office.
 - b. The VR&E IDES program is currently serving approximately **650 Servicemembers**.
 - c. Completing development of claims in **2 days**.
 - d. Fourth highest average monthly caseload of IDES Army sites, with **115 cases per month**.
 - e. Second highest installation-level satisfaction with a weighted overall satisfaction percentage of **91%**.
 - f. **Seventh Highest** total number of cases processed since IDES inception.
 - g. The VRCs are actively involved in providing IDES briefings at the Medical Evaluation Board briefings in addition to biweekly briefings provided to the Warrior Transition Unit. The VR&E IDES program at Ft. Campbell also offers a walk-in service for service members seeking more information about VR&E. Ft. Campbell and the service members are very excited to have VR&E on post to assist with their transition.

Nashville Call Center (NCC)

- 1. For Fiscal Year 2015, the Nashville Call Center has answered **667,596** calls.
- 2. FYTD the wait time for all VA Call Centers nationally is **6 minutes and 15 seconds**.
- 3. Veteran Service Organization (VSO) 800 Number Pilot
 - a. The Nashville Call Center has sole responsibility for providing assistance through a toll free line to our VSO partners across the nation and has **24 PCR**s dedicated to providing expeditious service to our VSO partners.
 - b. The VSO pilot line has been operational since May 13, 2013. Agents have answered over **213,026** calls with a wait time of approximately **5:10** minutes with no blocked calls.
- 4. VSO/ Stakeholder Enterprise Portal (SEP) Live Chat and Co-Browse Pilot & eBenefits
 - a. The Nashville Call Center is using the VSO designated line for the National Call Center Chat Pilot. The pilot began on September 15, 2014. Phase One of the pilot addressed general questions. There have been **111,389** Chats with an average wait time of **4:24** minutes and a Chat

duration of **12:01** minutes. Phase Two of the pilot began in January 2015 and focuses on PII/personal benefit information.

- b. The Nashville Call Center currently has **10** eBenefits Remote Proofing agents, to assist Veterans with their premium level access to eBenefits, which allows them to self-service items to include check status of claim, status of payment, and generate benefit letter.
5. The Nashville Call Center is in the process of recruiting new agents, all of those are anticipated to be Veterans.

Events: October - present

1. Hardin County Library Outreach- Savannah, Tennessee
On October 15, 2015, Kevin Davis, Public Contact Assistant Coach, conducted outreach at the Hardin County Public Library in Savannah, Tennessee. Mr. Davis assisted Veterans with claim related questions and issues.
2. Ombudsman Elderly Outreach for Benefits Education Event- Nashville, Tennessee
On October 20, 2015, Tina Huff, Elderly Outreach Coordinator, conducted outreach at the Ombudsman Elderly Outreach for Benefits Education Event in Nashville, Tennessee. Ms. Huff assisted elderly Veterans with claim related questions and issues.
3. Ft. Campbell Hiring for Heroes Event- Clarksville, Tennessee
On October 22, 2015, Director Edna MacDonald and Jose Marrero, Military Services Coordinator, participated in the Ft. Campbell Hiring for Heroes Event in Clarksville, Tennessee. Ms. MacDonald participated in a panel discussion, while Mr. Marrero assisted Service Members and Veterans with claim related questions and issues.
4. Annual Tri-State VSO Conference- Memphis, Tennessee
On October 22, 2015, Shelly Peterson, AVSCM, provided a briefing at the Annual Tri-State VSO Conference in Memphis, Tennessee. Ms. Peterson also provided outreach assistance to VSOs by answering claims related questions.
5. 19th Annual Community Praise in the Park Picnic- Nashville, Tennessee
On October 24, 2015, Phyllis Gardner, Minority Veterans Outreach Coordinator, conducted outreach at the 19th Annual Community Praise in the Park Picnic in Nashville, Tennessee. Ms. Gardner assisted minority Veterans with claim related questions and issues.
6. Veteran and Military Family Center Grand Opening at Middle Tennessee State University– Murfreesboro, Tennessee
On November 5, 2015, Director Edna MacDonald and nine staff members traveled to Murfreesboro, Tennessee to conduct a claims clinic for Veteran students on campus. The Nashville Regional Office staff assisted Veterans with vocational rehabilitation questions, eBenefits assistance and claims related questions and issues.
7. Making the Most of Veterans Benefits Community Education Event - Hendersonville, Tennessee
On November 10, 2015, Heidi Rhodes, Public Contact Coach, conducted outreach at the Making the Most of Veterans Benefits Community Education Event in Hendersonville, Tennessee. Ms. Rhodes assisted Veterans with claim related questions and issues.
8. Glenn Residential Center Event- Nashville, Tennessee
On November 10, 2015, Phyllis Gardner, Minority Veterans Outreach Coordinator, conducted outreach at the Glenn Residential Center Event in Nashville, Tennessee. Ms. Gardner assisted minority Veterans with claim related questions and issues.
9. Veterans Day Parade Annual Event- Nashville, Tennessee

On November 11, 2015, Director Edna MacDonald and numerous Nashville Regional Office employees participated in the Annual Nashville Veterans Day Parade. The Nashville Regional Office staff also assisted Veterans with claims related questions and issues.

10. VBA/VHA Town Hall Meeting – Dover, Tennessee

On November 16, 2015, Director Edna MacDonald and three staff members traveled to Dover, Tennessee to join the Tennessee Valley Healthcare System (TVHS) in conducting a joint Town Hall Meeting. The Nashville Regional Office staff assisted Veterans with claims related questions and issues.

11. Operation Stand-Down Event- Nashville, Tennessee

On November 17, 2015 through November 18, 2015, Rebecca Ryals, Homeless Veterans Outreach Coordinator and Phyllis Gardner, Minority Veterans Outreach Coordinator, conducted outreach at the Operation Stand-Down Event in Nashville, Tennessee. Ms. Ryals and Ms. Gardner assisted homeless and minority Veterans with claim related questions and issues.